

# Idaho Logging Safety News

Published quarterly in the interest of logging safety by the  
Division of Building Safety, Logging Safety Bureau

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By David Kludt ~ Can you believe the weather? Everybody works straight through the summer and now we come into the fall expecting rain and mud and barely get a smell. As I write this it's nearly 0 degrees and everybody is still going strong. The surprising thing is the sawmills all want and need more wood. I guess as always we just take it as it comes.

As the season continues to stretch out we have had some accidents recently and sadly, we did experience our first logging fatality of the year

when a timber faller was struck by the top of a dead white fir that was brushed by a tree he was falling. It doesn't matter how many of these we have looked at over the years, they are still very hard to take. I think sometimes we hear about and experience near-misses and after a while tend to not take them as seriously as we should. We forget what difference a fraction of an inch can make!

We were involved with the Associated Logging Contractors and the Montana Logging Association during early November helping put on a safety conference to address some of the problems and concerns that confront our log truckers in

Idaho. Although not as well attended as we would have hoped, there was certainly some valuable information received by those that were able to make it.



*I am guessing by their smiles the boss hasn't showed up yet!*



*"Honest boss, it will make it easier to weld those ice lugs on."*

Winter logging is fast approaching and I have already heard of a number of incidents that involved cats and loaders that didn't have proper ice lugs welded on. With the number of narrow, out-sloped roads that you are working on, these become even more important. This is also the time of year to think about the slips and falls that the insurance companies have identified as the main cause of injuries for logging. Obviously, these are greatly magnified as the snow and ice start appearing on the jobs. We need to get into

that winter mode and pay attention to the new problems that arise with the changing conditions.

From everything I hear, it looks like most of you are going to have a very busy fall and winter, so make it a safe one and we'll see you in the woods. !

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A young man was operating a skid crawler on some fairly steep ground. He suddenly ran onto some rocks and the dozer started sliding sideways. He slid a fair distance when the tracks hit some softer dirt and the machine rolled. It bounced him around pretty good and busted a few bones but luckily he stayed in the cab and survived what could have been a very serious accident.

I guess when you're skidding on steep ground, you need to make sure of the footing, build an adequate skid trail and always fasten your seatbelt.

Some loggers came to work early one morning and found out the reason we continue to harp about falling the snags around the landing area before working on them. During the night a snag fell from the upper bank and landed directly on the loader. Luckily nobody was around but the loader required some serious damage repair.



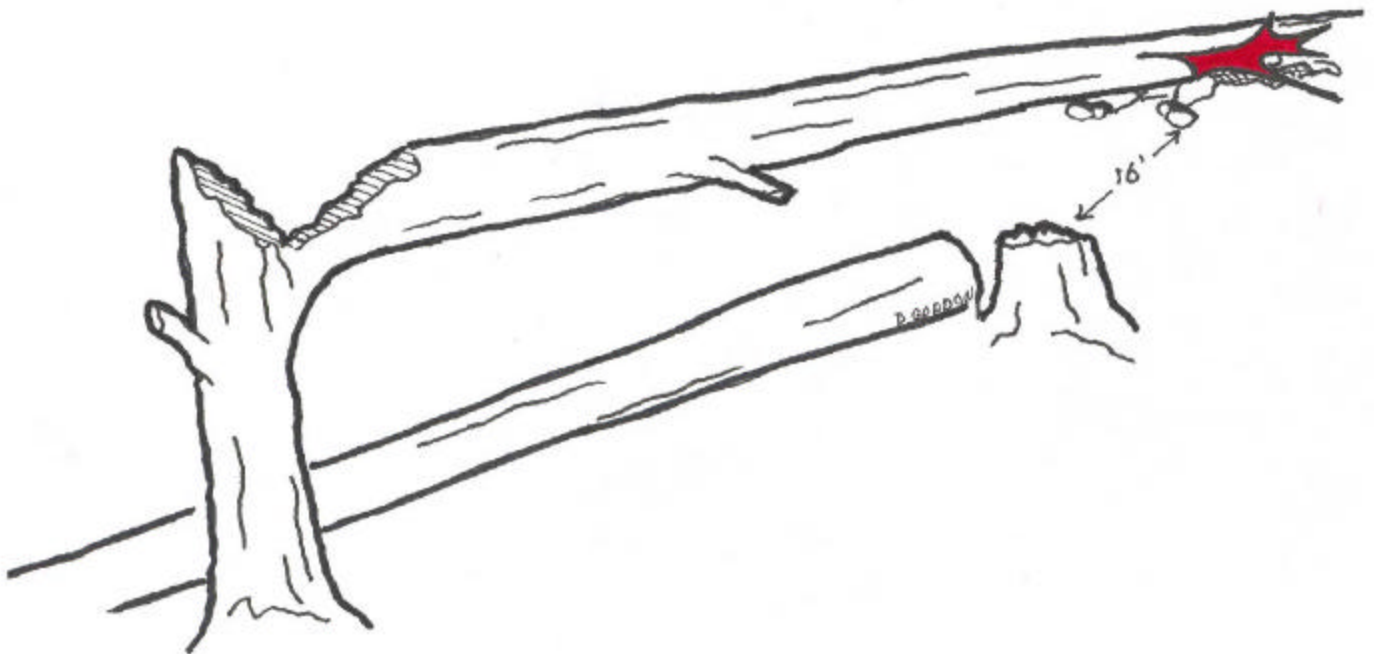
**Jack Voorhees** knows how to beat the summer heat. I got this picture from Steve Ulhorn Logging in Kamiah. How quickly things have changed in a couple of months. I was on the job getting some help from the crew on a new first aid video for next spring. They not only did a great job of acting, but also know how to have a little fun as this picture of Jack shows.

**THANKS FOR THE HELP!**



# FATALITY #1 2003

A timber faller was killed in northern Idaho in late October. He was in a heavy stand and had fell a large white fir out. The white fir brushed a large white fir snag in front of him. The snag didn't knock down but broke off and came back striking the faller in the back approximately 16 feet from the stump of the tree he had just fell.





# STATE COMM—OUR LOGGERS LIFELINE



It is pouring down rain and getting colder as the sun goes down. The fellow you have been riding to the woods with for the last fourteen years and also happens to be one of your best friends since the first grade has just gotten hit by the butt of a tree that rolled down a cut bank. He is screaming in pain, grabbing at his chest and stomach as he rolls in the mud. What now partner?

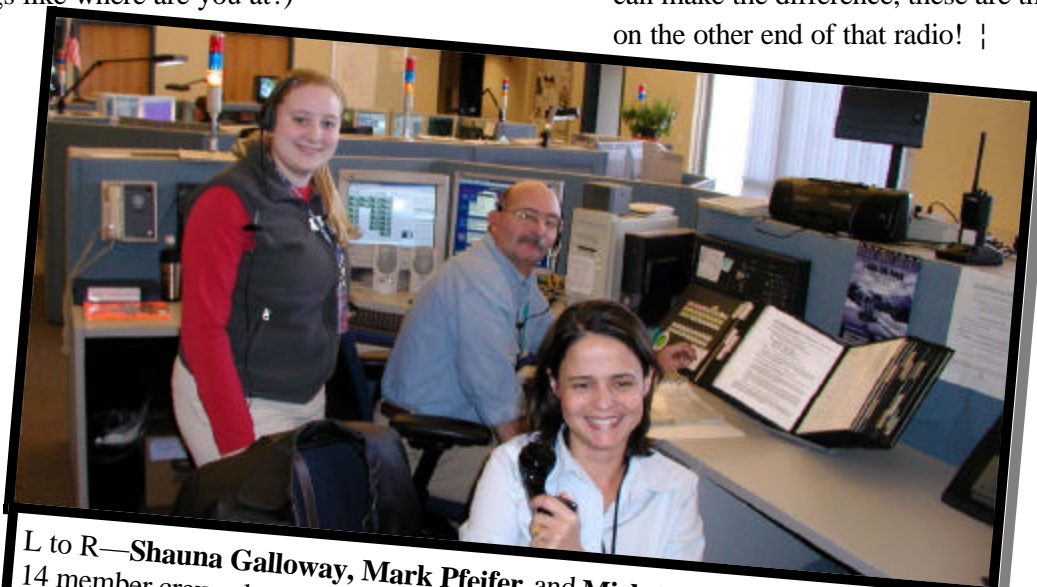
Oh sure, we know first-aid, but how is that going to help us here. He is obviously breathing and there is no blood spouting out...NO, we need to get him to a hospital in a hurry! You grab the company radio and turn it to the channel that is marked on the sticker on the dash and yell into the mike, "I got a logger hurt bad and need some help, NOW"!

A calm voice comes back across the airwaves, assuring you that help is here, but, there just needs to be a couple of questions answered first. (Little things like where are you at?)

We have been talking about State Comm. for the last fifteen years telling you that this is who you should call in case of an emergency. Who in the heck are these people? Is this some guy with bad hearing and vision sitting at a desk with a metal globe, a worn out phone book, a stack of old logging maps and one of those crank phones mounted to the side of the power pole outside of his tent? Close, but not quite.

At four different "terminals" sit some of the most knowledgeable, helpful, friendly and professional people you would ever hope to meet. Trained in the use of the most sophisticated, computerized maps, they can take our loggers directions, sometimes a little on the excited side, and find a job site within seconds. Because they are in contact with every air and ground ambulance along with all the sheriff departments in Idaho, they can send us the help we need immediately.

After dealing with these people at State Comm. over the years on different issues, I can flat out tell you guys that we have faith in this crew. They understand what you loggers are up against with the remoteness and difficult terrain where you work. When minutes can make the difference, these are the people we want on the other end of that radio! !



L to R—**Shauna Galloway**, **Mark Pfeifer** and **Michele Carreas** are three of the 14 member crew, along with manager **Shana Barnes**, that may be on the other end of an emergency call for you loggers someday. They are trained well, work hard plus they like loggers, so they can't be all bad!

## SOMETIMES THIS SAFETY STUFF IS KIND OF FUNNY

A timber faller was hurt on a logging job and his injuries required him to be packed out. This company was working close to another logging outfit so the neighbors were asked to help, which of course they did. This story was told to me by one of the loggers that volunteered.

When they got to the landing the guys had their transporting device laid out. It was one of those metal basket types that also had a canvas over it. The logger said there was a bunch of them that grabbed a hold so it kind of surprised him how heavy it was. Now, they had been told that the injured faller was at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile out in the woods and after traveling only a hundred yards, this logger was worn out. He was very concerned about the rest of the trip.

At about 150 yards everyone was panting and sweating profusely, but like this logger said, you can't admit you are about ready to die because, well, you're a logger! He said there was, thankfully, a young kid



with them that just started working in the woods that did not know about some of these unwritten rules.

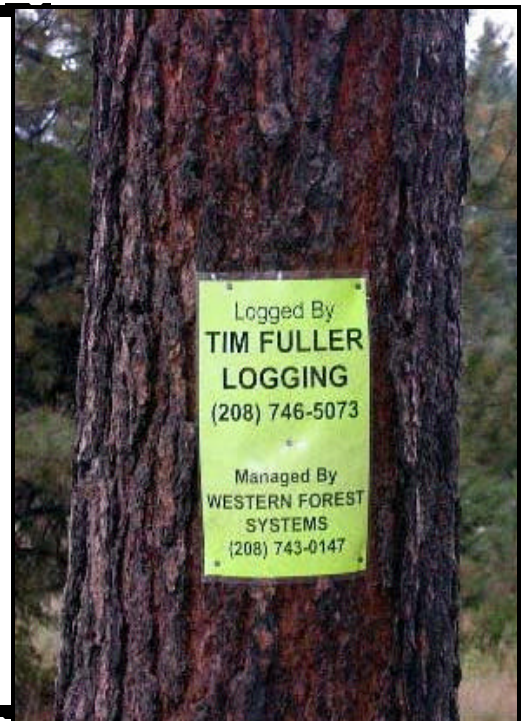
"What the heck is in this thing anyway, it weighs a ton", the young logger complained. "Oh it ain't bad, but if the kid is having a hard time we might as well take a look", the other loggers QUICKLY agreed.

The logger told me that the canvas alone weighed close to a hundred pounds. The basket was completely full of extra tapes, saw bars, chains and several metal first-aid kits. The total amount weighing about 3 times what the faller weighed on the way back out.

He reported that they were happy they looked and were able to unload the 300 pounds of stuff. You know, for the sake of the kid! !

## TIM FULLER LOGGING

As I drive around the country I always see some interesting and innovative ideas. The sign on Tim Fuller's logging job says it all. Every job that he logs has this sign. He's proud of the work that he and his crew do and should be. Tim, who logs out of Lewiston, has been logging many years and primarily runs a mechanical operation. He has a small crew of about 4 people. One thing I've always noticed about logging outfits is that if they do a good job of logging, they also do a good job with their safety. That is certainly true with Fuller Logging. By the way, Tim says those signs have already bought him several jobs ~ Good job and good idea!



# FALL SAFETY CONFERENCE

by Galen Hamilton

It was an experiment. The idea came on fast. We knew that everyone was busy logging, it was in the middle of hunting season for many, it was going to be on a Saturday and the topics were all directed toward log trucking safety. Everything was against the meeting from the start, and I can honestly say it was probably the best darn meeting I have attended since I have been doing this logging safety stuff.

The idea of a conference originated because of concerns over increasing accidents on the trucking side at the same time they are establishing their own trucker's rate for insurance. We figured it was time to talk.

We went to the Montana Logging Association's safety boys for help. Montana has experienced what we may be about to experience, so we thought we might want to hear first hand what we were in for. As always, the guys from the MLA dropped everything and came running to help.

? John Hansen (MLA safety guru) and Rich Tatarka led off the meeting talking about what type of accidents they have been having and how that has caused their truck rate to blow up over the last three years. One big thing that has happened since trucking was separated from logging is that the insurance money pool is smaller for both groups thus causing greater volatility in the rates.

? John Graham followed with statistics of accidents truckers are having here. The numbers and frequencies were almost exactly the same as Montana's. Slips and falls and falling off equipment led both lists. These types of accidents happened mainly in the winter, which right now I know you are saying "duh, Galen", but I mean they went from very few accidents to many accidents happening nearly everyday when the snow and ice showed up. Something to think about the next time you see someone walking down a snow covered trailer reach packing a couple of extensions.

? Essam Assaad brought up some very simple but useful suggestions on workman's comp claims. Quick and clear communication with your insurance carrier and taking notes at the time of the accident were just two of many. If someone tries to cause trouble over a claim a year or two down the road, a fellow's memory might not be enough. If there are good notes a fellow may be able to say, baloney! This works for both parties on a claim!

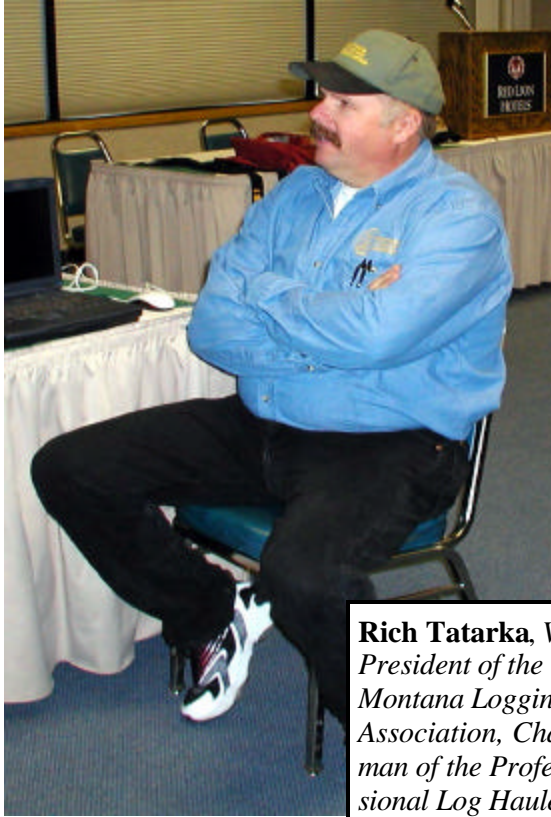
? Paul Uken (MLA safety guru) talked about the Professional Log Haulers Program they have in Montana. I won't go through all that it covers but I liked what Uken said about it. "It is one of those deals that most everyone goes into saying "what a load of crap", but comes out saying it was worth the time spent". Paul, with the help of Jason Todhunter (MLA safety guru) keeping him on track, went through some safety issues with trucks in the woods and the mill yards.

? Shawn Keough, Executive Director of the Associated Logging Contractors, finished out the day discussing current and upcoming issues concerning loggers here in Idaho. Shawn is also a state senator so she was able to talk about what may be affecting us legislatively.

**John Graham,**  
manager of the  
Associated  
Loggers  
Exchange,  
chats with  
Coeur d'Alene  
logger **Frank  
Howerton.**







**Rich Tatarka, Vice President of the Montana Logging Association, Chairman of the Professional Log Haulers Program and an independent log hauler from the Bozeman area.**

I am not even coming close to mentioning all the information that was brought out in this meeting. As you might have noticed by the way I started this article, there was not the attendance we had hoped for, which bothers a guy, but to tell the truth I am not sure it wasn't a good thing in disguise. The fewer the people the more loggers are willing to talk. When John H., Rich, John G. and Shawn brought up certain subjects, unbelievable discussions were started. Not everyone agreed with each other, in fact there were many different ideas and thoughts going around. But you know what, every one of those loggers in that room made awful good points. In fact, like Kludt said afterwards, those loggers said things that made us think about this safety stuff differently than we had before.

Politics and money were of course big issues, but I better not talk about them in our newsletter. Some good old common sense ideas coming from those in attendance were mounting brackets on the side of the stakes for the stake extensions so the guys don't have to crawl up

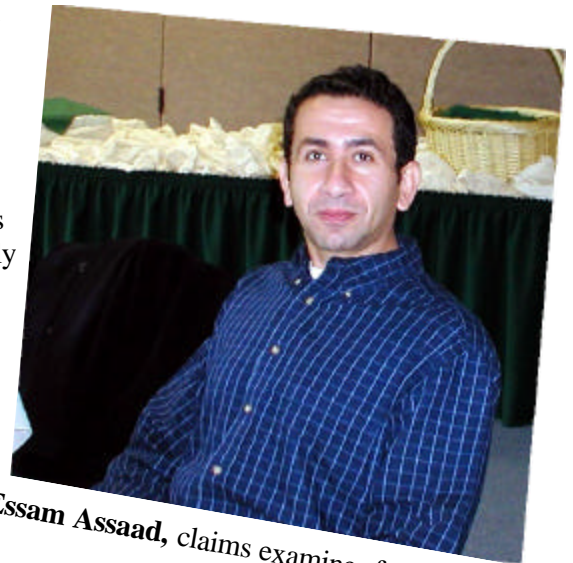
on the truck packing them. One fellow welded some railroad spikes on the bunks to have more than just the bunk to stand on while trying to lift the extensions in. Another beefed up the quarter fenders so the guys could actually use them as a step and mounted springs to hold the bunks from turning, thus doing away with the trailer bunk pins so there was no reason for the drivers to be wandering back there. Fatigue from the long hours truckers work was distinctly pointed out by nearly everyone as the cause of many accidents.

The one figure that I will end this article on that really made an impression on me was the fact that accident rates have dropped around 70% in the last 15 years. Sometimes I know you loggers ask yourselves, as I can guarantee us safety guys do, what the heck is this safety stuff buying me? Right now the loggers comp rate is around \$19.60 per \$100.00 of payroll. John Graham figured if the trend would have continued as it was going 15 years ago, it would be around \$56.00 per \$100.00 of payroll today. I know things are tight these days but if it wasn't for all the work you loggers have done with the safety on your logging jobs, things would look a lot worse today.

If nothing else, this conference certainly got all of us thinking about the importance of what everyone does and why we do it! ;

## ACCIDENT

**A line machine operator received a broken foot when he jumped from the cab of the 98-linkbelt he was operating. One of the tie back lines failed and the machine started to tip. The second tie back caused the machine to swing around and flip onto its side. The accident occurred near St. Maries.**



**Essam Assaad, claims examiner for the ALE**

**Mike Madarieta** bucks a log in the landing which, in this case, is also the parking lot of a local ski area. Madarieta and his crew have worked at this ski area several times over the years taking out danger trees or doing clear cut---oh, I mean developing new ski runs. Mike is one of the nicest, hard working and talented loggers you will ever meet, and he can still toss a heck of a game of fast pitch baseball which is something when you consider his age!



## KEOUGH VISITS AREA LOGGERS

On a recent trip to the southern part of the state, Shawn took time to visit some of the loggers working in the New Meadows area. Luckily it was the early part of November so the weather hadn't turned off bad yet. It was only three below that morning!

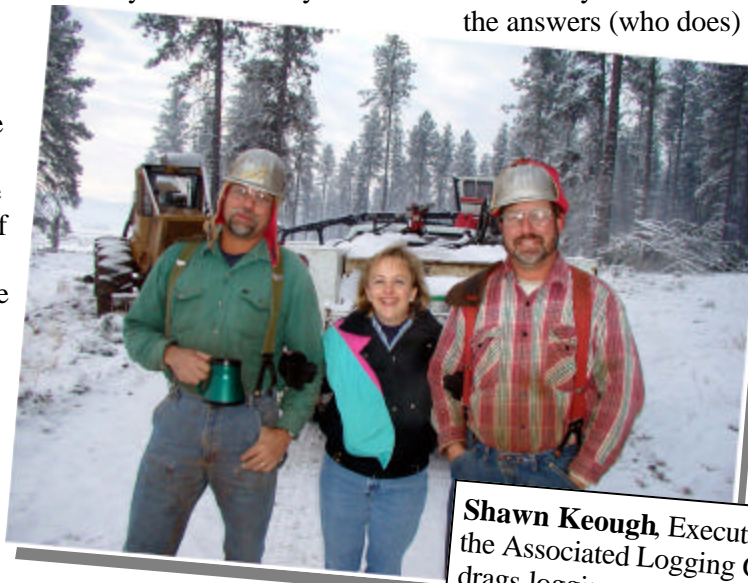
She talked to several loggers, some ALC and some not, but heard about the same from all. They were concerned over the lack of any federal timber being put up for sale, the decline in sawmills, stumpage prices not consistent with market prices and import of lumber from other countries. I am sure it is the same things she hears when she talks to loggers all around the state.

I appreciate Shawn because she pays attention to what is going on out in the woods. She realizes that the extra effort put out to run a safe operation does not come easy or

without cost. I also noticed that when I talk about certain safety issues, she understands what the problems are. She also really listens to what the loggers have to say. She honestly admits to not having all the answers (who does) and says she is open to any good ideas. If you loggers

have any positive comments that will help the industry, give her a call at the ALC office in Coeur D'Alene. She is very easy to talk to and isn't as mean as she looks. She quit twisting the Deasy boy's arms right after I took this picture and then gave them a whole ten minutes to eat their lunch before send-

ing them out to put more wood on the ground! !



**Shawn Keough**, Executive Director of the Associated Logging Contractors, drags logging association members **Doug and Mike Deasey** out of a warm crummy and urges them to go cut down some trees!



# THAT'S WINTER LOGGING

This incident occurred a few winters ago but it might give you an idea on what can happen if all the right circumstances exist. Stan was hauling logs out of the back country near Clarkia. The outfit he was working for had ten trucks hauling and two log loaders, so things were pretty busy with a truck coming off the hill every fifteen minutes or so. A portion of the road coming off the mountain they were logging had a straight stretch a couple hundred yards long but had around a fifteen percent grade. Well, Stanley thought he could make it off the hill with only one set of triples on. Everyone had been running two sets and the really cautious ones were throwing a little iron on the trailer. As Stan came around the corner and entered the steep stretch the truck commenced to hopping because the road was getting rough from the empties churning up the hill.

His truck started jumping and sliding a bit. Stan figured he had better turn off the Jake. (that's what truckers do when the drivers start turning backwards but the truck is gaining speed). He thought he'd better grab a higher gear to get the tires turning forward again, however, that caused his truck to gain too much speed. Stanley quickly surveyed all the options. He looked at all the controls and when he didn't see an eject button, he decided to

leave that old Kenmore via the door. He hit the snowy road and slid a bit but he had survived the jump. He lay there watching his soon-to-be former employers truck crash through the timber below him. Then he heard a noise and out of the corner of his eye there was a large yellow bumper coming at him. "Oh Oh", another truck was right behind him. Stanley managed to pass under the front bumper and front axle but got hung up on one of the rear end pots. He was drug along but finally came loose all battered and bruised. "Oh help me Jesus to lie flat on the ground" he thought because here come the trailer axles. Well as things worked out he survived the ordeal with only scrapes and bruises.

No one seems to know where old Stanley went but word is that he is working for the D.O.T. as a truck inspector. !



## FELLER-BUNCHERS DON'T WORK WELL ON THEIR SIDE

Within a couple of weeks I visited two different job sites that somewhat embarrassingly reported they had tipped over their feller-bunchers. If you are like me my first thought was, "No wonder, as steep of ground as they work on". Well, in both cases I was wrong as usual. They had each gotten off the steep ground and were headed into the landing!

Between getting the one machine back up and fixing it, the one company lost three days of production and although the other company did not lose quite as much time, it left the cab permanently laid over. I have been around both of these operators for years and both are very good at what they do. Thankfully neither was hurt. I tried to put these two incidents in the "crap happens" column and move on, but I am having a hard time with that.

Quite a few years ago now, even though it still seems like yesterday, I drove out with a logger to investigate a fatality on his job. This fatality also happened to be his son. The young logger was done for the day and taking his feller-buncher back to the landing when it tipped over.

This old logging industry is very unforgiving and we can't let our guard down even for a second. This isn't directed just to these two guys but to all of you loggers doing every job out there. I am not lecturing, just reminding! !

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